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A JOINT MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF NEW MEXICO STATE
UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL COACH LOU HENSON.

WHEREAS, Lou Henson began his coaching career as the head basketball coach at Las Cruces high school in 1958, amassing a record of one hundred forty-five wins and twenty-three losses and leading his teams to the state championship in 1959, 1960 and 1961; and

WHEREAS, Coach Henson entered the collegiate coaching ranks in 1962 at Hardin-Simmons, where he began a forty-one year career that would take him to the university of Illinois and to New Mexico state university for two tours and would eventually make him the all-time sixth-winningest coach among national collegiate athletic association division I coaches; and

WHEREAS, Coach Henson, whose approachable, gentlemanly style stood in marked contrast to many of his coaching colleagues, became affectionately and simply known as "Lou" to legions of fans at Illinois, where he coached for twenty-one seasons, and New Mexico state university, his alma mater; and

WHEREAS, Lou's career was punctuated by many highlights, including becoming only one of ten division I coaches to lead two schools to the national collegiate athletic association

1 final four; becoming the all-time winningest coach at both
2 Illinois and New Mexico state university; coaching his first
3 Aggie team, known as the "Miracle Midgets" because no player
4 stood taller than six feet, five inches, to a winning record
5 a year after going just four wins and twenty-two losses;
6 guiding the 1988-89 Illinois team to a number one national
7 ranking, the last Illinois team to reach that mark until this
8 year's team; and coaching what is considered to be the best
9 Aggie team ever, the 1969-70 team led by Sam Lacey and Jimmy
10 Collins, to a season record of twenty-seven wins and three
11 losses; and

12 WHEREAS, his remarkable coaching talent and ability to
13 inspire others to achieve beyond their dreams was never
14 tested as much as it was in 2001, when he coached an
15 overrated New Mexico house of representatives team to a
16 narrow, overtime victory over an aging senate team; and

17 WHEREAS, Lou "retired" from coaching in 1996 and
18 returned to Las Cruces with his wife, Mary, but quickly
19 demonstrated his class, love for the game and loyalty to the
20 fans and his alma mater by accepting for a second time the
21 head coaching job at New Mexico state university for the
22 salary of one dollar (\$1.00) a month; and

23 WHEREAS, Lou continued to coach the Aggies until
24 persistent health problems prompted him to take himself out
25 of the game, just a season or so away from becoming only the

1 fifth coach in division I history to top eight hundred
2 victories; and

3 WHEREAS, it is the sincere hope of the men and women of
4 the New Mexico legislature that Coach Henson fully enjoy many
5 hours each day with his loving wife, Mary; his daughters,
6 Lori, Lisa and Leigh Anne; and his twelve grandchildren;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
8 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that hearty congratulations and sincere
9 thanks be extended to Lou Henson for his career achievements
10 and for his contributions to the game of basketball, the
11 lives of thousands of young men, sports fans everywhere and
12 the residents of the state of New Mexico; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
14 transmitted to Lou Henson. _____

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